

PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION MINUTES

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2002

Chair Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. at the Twin Pines Senior and Community Center.

ROLL CALL:

Present, Commissioners: Parsons, Mathewson, Gibson, Torre, Feierbach, Wiecha

Absent Commissioners: None

Present, Staff: Principal Planner de Melo (PP), Community Development Director Ewing (CDD), City Attorney Savaree (CA), Recording Secretary Flores (RS)

AGENDA STUDY SESSION None

AGENDA AMENDMENTS None

COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments): None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

5A. Minutes for February 5, 2002

Minutes of February 5, 2002 were withdrawn to April 2, 2002 Planning Commission Meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

7A. 2636 Ponce Avenue

Chair Parsons confirmed with staff that the item for 2636 Ponce Avenue was continued to a date uncertain.

7B. PUBLIC HEARING – 2518 RALSTON AVENUE

To consider a Single Family Design Review and a Tree Removal Permit to allow construction of a new 2,092 square foot single family residence in a zoning district that permits 2,100 square feet.

(Appl. No. 01-0128)

Zoning: HRO-2

APN: 043-322-070 and 043-322-080

CEQA Status: Exempt

Ahmad Abdel-Rahman and Reem Faddah – Owner/Applicant

PP de Melo summarized the staff report and was available for questions from the Commission.

C Wiecha asked if any action would be taken tonight on the road construction and if entitlements were in place for the project?

PP de Melo stated the Road Construction Project was not part of the public hearing tonight and stated that entitlements were previously approved.

Chair Parsons stated this Planning Commission did not approve the entitlements. PP de Melo concurred.

C Matthewson stated that part of the staff report said there were a number of protected remaining trees on site and mitigation measures established as conditions of approval for this project. "Are there also measures for the tree being removed?" Three additional trees to be planted? Is that the usual 3-1 mitigation?

PP de Melo replied, he did not believe that was the case for this property. Because the lot is fairly studded with trees, the applicant and city arborist came to the conclusion that the relocation efforts of the tree to be removed will serve as the mitigation as well as the tree protection measures to satisfy the merits of the tree removal permit. So the plantings at the 3-1 ratio were not required from the City Arborist Walter Levinson.

C Feierbach requested an update on the request from the Planning Commission for the City Council to take another look at the Roadway Plan. She went on to say that she has not seen the request on any of the City Council Agendas, and asked for a status update on the request.

CA Savaree responded that her office was contacted and asked whether or not there was any way in which the Council could re-look at the approvals. It was her advice to the City Manager's office that those approvals were in place, and there was no basis in the ordinances to bring it back to the Council. The City Manager indicated that he would speak to the Mayor at the next agenda setting to discuss the topic and convey that advice from her office.

C Feierbach asked which agenda?

CA Savaree replied, she spoke with the City Manager approximately one week after the Planning Commission's request.

Applicant Adam Naser summarized the changes made to the application and mentioned the letters of support from neighbors. He was available for questions from the Planning Commission.

C Parsons opened the Public Hearing.

David Fisher, 2504 Ralston Ave spoke in favor of the project. He stated the only problem he had was with the new road requiring removal of 3-4 trees on Ralston. Mr. Fisher posed the question to the Planning Commission to build a road straight out to Ralston and not to build the road extension. He was also concerned about proper drainage.

C Parsons stated there would be discussion later regarding his question.

Kamal Fallaha 708 Crane Ave, Civil Engineer, stated he designed the roadway and was available to answer questions.

MOTION: By Commissioner Mathewson, seconded by Commissioner Torre, to close the public hearing.

MOTION: Passed

C Gibson stated he was in favor of this project. He continued to discuss a previous project on Coronet, which was approved by the Commission, then appealed to Council. The Council, along with the applicant, came up with an alternative design. The road is directly off of Ralston Avenue. C Gibson stated he believed Mr. Naser has already discussed this with Public Works, however, C Gibson believes it is not too late to revisit this alternative. He believes strongly that it would be in everyone's best interest to do so. This roadway will

consist of a substantial retaining wall and will take substantial engineering to build it. He stated by the time trees are removed, a retaining wall is built, they put in utility poles, wires, cables and equipment boxes Mr. Naser would be looking at well over \$100,000. If the project could be modified, and the road go straight out to Ralston as they did with the Coronet project, Mr. Naser could save a substantial amount of money and the city could save approximately 4-5 mature trees. He asked this alternative be considered.

MOTION: By Commissioner Wiecha, seconded by Commissioner Gibson, approving the single family design review and tree removal permit at 2518 Ralston Avenue.

Ayes: Wiecha ,Torre, Feierbach, Gibson, Mathewson, Parsons

Noes: Feierbach

Absent: None

Motion Passed 5/1

Chair Parsons noted that the item is appealable within ten days.

Chair Parsons stated he would hope that the current City Council would take another look at what is being proposed by the City with regards to the Roadway plan, passed by a previous City Council.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

9A. Consideration of request for extension of Floor Area Exception and Single Family Design Review granted by Planning Commission on February 6, 2001 for 824 Covington Road.

PP de Melo summarized the staff report recommending approval and was available for questions.

Applicant David Taylor asked for the Commission's support for the extension request and was available for questions from the Commission.

MOTION: by Commissioner Mathewson, second by Commissioner Torre to approve the single family design review and FAR extension at 825 Covington until date specified by staff.

Ayes: Mathewson,Torre, Wiecha Feierbach, Gibson, Parsons

Noes: None

Motion Passed 6/0

REPORTS, STUDIES, UPDATES, AND COMMENTS

CDD Ewing mentioned the upcoming Planners Institute in Monterey. He also mentioned The City of Belmont would be opening the new Permit Center on Monday, March 25th and encouraged the Commission to attend. The Permit Center will issue building permits, zoning clearances and encroachment permits all from a single site.

C Mathewson recommended reading Governing Magazine, which has articles on land use, economic development, regulation information, etc; and provided an e-mail address for those interested.

Chair Parsons congratulated the Commissioners that were re-appointed.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m. to a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 2, 2002 at Twin Pines Senior and Community Center.

Craig A. Ewing, AICP

Planning Commission Secretary

Audiotapes of Planning Commission Meetings are available for review

in the Community Development Department.

Please call (650) 595-7416 to schedule an appointment